

CLAIMS

1. A method for estimating ink usage of a print job, comprising:
connecting a computer peripheral device to a host computer
having predefined information relating to the peripheral device; and
offering pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables
for completing the print job, before the print job is performed.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the host computer is linked to a
generic printer driver located on the host computer.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the host computer is linked to a
remote printer driver in a server system.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the server supplies information
pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host
computer.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the remote server is linked to
the host computer via at least one of the Internet or a local intranet.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining printing
parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing
requirements of the print job.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the printing parameters includes
at least one of print quantity, print quality, print type and paper type.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the printing parameters are
ascertained by a remote printer driver and forwarded to a server.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the printing parameters are
incorporated by the server in data files to be used by various combinations of

instrumented drivers and printers located on the server and shared by other printers connected to the server.

5 10. A method for analyzing ink usage for a printer, comprising:
 communicating a type of ink cartridge and ink reservoir system
 to a host computer as part of a print job submission;
 estimating the ink to be used in a print job based on predefined
 printing requirements; and
 determining the number of print swaths and pages the ink
10 cartridge can complete based on ink available in the ink reservoir system.

 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising relaying to the
determined information to a user.

15 12. The method of claim 11, further comprising providing the user
with a plurality of options, including allowing the print job to proceed, choosing
an alternative printing system, and ordering ink consumables for the printer.

20 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising offering the user
upgrade options, including ordering a generic stand alone printer driver and a
server printer driver.

25 14. The method of claim 11, further comprising providing the user
with a hyperlink via the Internet to a supplier of the printer for automatic
ordering of the ink consumables.

30 15. An ink usage monitoring system for estimating ink usage of a
print job, comprising:
 a computer peripheral device for performing the print job; and
 a host computer connected to the computer peripheral device
and having predefined information relating to the peripheral device, wherein

the host computer has pricing and estimation of ink and image consumables for completing the print job, before the print job is performed.

5 16. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 15, further comprising a remote printer driver located on a server that is connected to the host computer.

10 17. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 16, wherein the server supplies information pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host computer.

15 18. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 17, wherein the remote printer driver includes at least one of firmware and software that determines printing parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing requirements of the print job.

20 19. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 18, wherein the printing parameters includes at least one of print quantity, print quality, print type and paper type.

 20. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 18, wherein the printing parameters are ascertained by the remote printer driver and forwarded to the server that is connected to the host computer.

25 21. An ink usage monitoring system for estimating ink usage of a print job, comprising:
 means for connecting a computer peripheral device to a host computer having predefined information relating to the peripheral device; and
 means for offering pricing and estimation of ink and image
30 consumables for completing the print job, before the print job is performed.

22. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 21, wherein the host computer is linked to a generic printer driver located on the host computer.

23. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 22, wherein the host computer is linked to a remote printer driver in a server system.

24. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 23, wherein the server supplies information pertaining to a number of instrumented drivers and printers to the host computer.

25. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 23, wherein the remote server is linked to the host computer via at least one of the Internet or a local intranet.

26. The ink usage monitoring system of claim 21, further comprising means for determining printing parameters for choosing a print option that best fits budgetary and printing requirements of the print job.